

O'Leary To Keynote Gay Conference Here

THE CHAPEL HILL NEWSPAPER
(Chapel Hill, NC)

March 31, 1977

Jean O'Leary, coexecutive director of the National Gay Task Force, will deliver the keynote address at the second annual Southeastern Gay Conference this weekend at the University.

Some 400-500 people from all over the Southeast are expected for the three-day conference.

All events will be held at the Carolina Student Union. Registration is \$7 at the door.

O'Leary, who recently met with President Jimmy Carter at the White House, will speak at 9:30 a.m. Saturday on the Carter administration's impact on gays.

A 1976 delegate to the Democratic National Committee, O'Leary has been active in the National Women's Political Caucus and President Carter's national 51.3 Per Cent Committee for Women. She was founder and first president of the Lesbian Feminist Liberation, Inc.

Sponsored by the Carolina Gay Association, the conference will examine gay culture, lifestyles and history through speakers, films, exhibits, workshops, panel discussions and social events.

Bringing gay people together is one of the main goals of the conference, according to conference coordinator Karen

Peterson. "There's strength in numbers," she said. "Gays in the Southeast are more or less isolated, but we all have talents and interests to share."

Scheduled speakers for the conference include: Bob Basker, executive director of the Dade County Coalition for Humanistic Rights of Gays, who will speak at 8:30 p.m. Saturday on "Anita Bryant and the Dade County Gay Rights"; Barbara Gittings coordinator of the American Library Association's Task Force on Gay Liberation, who will speak at 7:30 p.m. Saturday on "Gay Unity and Separatism"; and authors Karla Jay and Allen Young, who will speak at 7:30 p.m. Friday on "A History of Gay and Lesbian Culture."

Workshops on subjects ranging from "Gays and Religion" to "How to Produce a Gay Television Show" will be held Friday afternoon and all day Saturday.



O'Leary

THE DAILY TAR HEEL
(Univ. of NC at Chapel Hill)

March 31, 1977

CGA to sponsor conference; gays slate speaker, workshops

More than 500 persons are expected to attend the second annual Southeastern Gay Conference at the Carolina Union April 1-3. The conference is sponsored by the Carolina Gay Association (CGA).

Jean O'Leary, featured speaker of the conference and coexecutive director of the National Gay Task Force, will speak on "Gays and the Carter Administration—the Movement of the 1980s" at 9:30 p.m. Saturday. She recently met with President Carter to discuss gay rights.

"O'Leary's speech will include material about her White House meetings with President Carter as well as with cabinet officials," said Allan Brown, CGA spokesperson. "Ms. O'Leary is expected to

break new details of her March 26 meeting with President Carter. She also will head two workshops."

The conference this year is entitled "A Celebration of the Gay Lifestyle," and will include more than 60 workshops as well as social activities.

Workshop topics include professional counseling and gays, establishing a statewide organization, lesbians in athletics, gays and the media, gays and religion, homosexuality and the blue-collar worker and getting changes in legislation.

"The conference is essentially the same as it was last year, but we have more social activities planned," Brown said.

—JACI HUGHES



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026 with funding from
CLIR DHC Grant 2026-2028

<https://archive.org/details/2174.14.23>

Gay Rights Forseen As Big Issue of '80s

By ART EISENSTADT

Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — National gay-liberation leaders called discrimination against homosexuals a major civil-rights problem and blasted singer Anita Bryant's antigay "witch hunt" at a convention here Saturday.

More than 600 men and women from at least 15 states are attending the Second Annual Southeastern Gay Conference at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill this weekend. The meeting is being hosted by the Carolina Gay Association, a UNC student organization.

"I believe that we're going to be the major, major civil-rights movement of the 1980s," Jean O'Leary, coexecutive director of the National Gay Task Force, said in a keynote address Saturday morning.

Gay Movement

Since 1969, the gay-activist movement "has moved farther and faster than any other civil-rights movement," Ms. O'Leary, a New York resident and a former nun, said.

Ms. O'Leary was one of about two dozen gay-rights activists who met with a White House aide March 26 to discuss policies against the hiring of homosexuals for certain federal government jobs.

Many government agen-

cies, particularly those with high-security and law enforcement operations, will not hire homosexuals, and any person in the armed forces who is discovered to be gay is given a less-than-honorable discharge, Ms. O'Leary said.

Major Goals

The gay leaders also lobbied for what Ms. O'Leary called their two major legislative goals of the year — extension of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual preference and repeal of state sodomy laws prohibiting certain sexual acts between consenting adults.

She added in an interview that it was unlikely that either goal would be fulfilled within the next few years, although Rep. Edward I. Koch, D-N.Y., has introduced gay civil-rights legislation in the House, Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., is expected to do so shortly in the Senate, and 18 states have repealed

their sodomy laws in the past few years.

Bryant Blasted

Both Ms. O'Leary and Robert S. Basker, executive director of the Dade County (Fla.) Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays, spoke out strongly against Anita Bryant's campaign to repeal a Dade County ordinance that prohibits discrimination against homosexuals in housing, employment and public accommodations.

Basker, of Miami, Fla., said Miss Bryant's activities, through an organization called Save Our Children Inc., have created a "witch-hunt atmosphere" in the Miami-Dade County area.

Miss Bryant led a petition campaign to force the Dade County Metro Commission either to repeal the ordinance, which was approved in January, or to hold a referendum on it. The commission has scheduled the referendum for June 7.

THE NEWS AND OBSERVER
(Raleigh, NC)

April 3, 1977

DURHAM MORNING HERALD
(Durham, NC)

April 4, 1977

Gay Leader Predicts Major Rights Drive

CHAPEL HILL (AP) — The drive to remove discrimination against homosexuals will become the major civil rights movement of the 1980s, a national leader of the gay liberation movement said here.

Jean O'Leary, co-executive director of the National Gay Task Force, made her remarks in a keynote address Saturday at the second annual Southeastern Gay Conference being held on the University of North Carolina campus.

More than 600 men and women from 15 states attended the meeting which was hosted by the Carolina Gay Association, a campus student organization.

The gay liberation movement "has moved farther and faster

than any other civil rights movement," said the New York resident and former nun.

Robert S. Basker, executive director of the Dade County (Fla.) Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays, criticized singer Anita Bryant's recent campaign in Dade County to repeal an ordinance that prohibits discrimination against gays in housing, unemployment and public accommodations.

Basker said the singer had created a "witch hunt" atmosphere in the Miami-Dade County area. Miss Bryant led a petition drive which asked the county commission to either repeal the ordinance or call for a referendum on the issue. The commission has scheduled a vote on June 7.

